



Discover Bulgaria





www.bulgariatravel.org

Bulgaria!
Your exciting adventure
or a wonderful tale...
Welcome!



BULGARIA

Discover Bulgaria!
Cultural Treasures of Bulgaria
Architectural Masterpieces - Houses, Churches, Monasteries
Wine and Cuisine
Bulgarian Mountains
Winter Tales from Bulgaria
Magnificent Black Sea Shore
Beauty and Health from 600 Mineral Springs
The Unique Bulgaria





Discover Bulgaria



Kaliakra

Discover Bulgaria – a wonderful combination of nature, ancient culture, healing springs and warm sea... Eyes and heart would be enough to taste the incredible colour of the Balkans, the magical variegation of the Koukers festivals, the motley national costumes, the songs from the Rhodope Mountains and the astonishing beauty of Bulgarian nature.



www.bulgariatravel.org



If you are attracted by unique nature, your meetings with Pirin, Rila and Rhodope mountains will leave you exciting memories of alpine mountain peaks, blue lakes, rich flora and fauna. The Balkan Range crosses lengthwise the Bulgarian territory and the capital Sofia is at the foot of Vitosha Mountain.



Pirin Mountain



Sliven

▲ Positioned on the crossroad between Europe and Asia, Bulgaria is the treasury that combines Thracian, Byzantine and Roman culture. What awaits you are exciting meetings with the brilliant Thracian treasures and tombs, the Karanovka mound, and the ancient Roman amphitheatres...



Central Blakan

Bulgaria is famous for its 600 healing mineral water springs. Another main advantage is that the bioclimate and the balneological resources are in rare combinations known as mountain combination and sea combination. The mixture of wonderful nature and modern Spa-complexes contributes to Bulgaria being a preferred Spa and wellness destination.

BULGARIA



Bulgarian lands enjoy the magnificence of four different seasons – fragrant spring, hot summer, golden fruit-bearing autumn and snowy winter. Each season is splendid and brings different types of entertainment - for those who are fans of extreme sports, for those who appreciate good taverns and colourful festivals, for the ones who seek unique natural landmarks and ancient culture...



Cultural Treasures of Bulgaria

BULGARIA



Tomb of Sveshtari



Veliko Tarnovo



Boyana Church

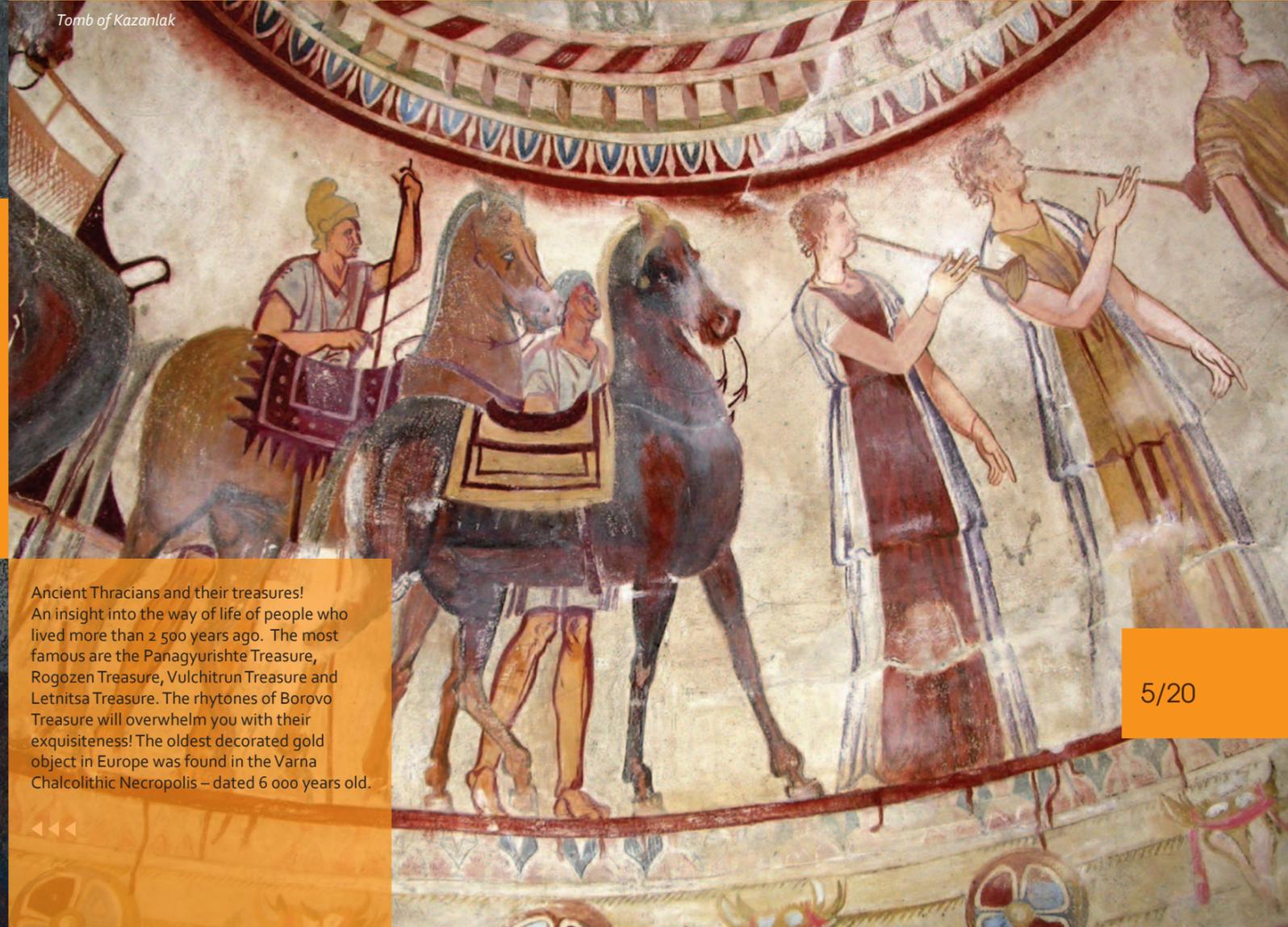
Lavish funerals in monumental tombs and in majestic mounds were typical for the aristocrats in the Thracian culture. The wall-paintings in the tomb of Kazanlak and the tomb close to Alexandrovo village are extraordinarily impressive. Another masterpiece of the Thracian funeral culture is the tomb of Sveshtari with its magnificent low-reliefs of caryatides.



Important stop points in your trips in Bulgaria are the unique cultural monuments of UNESCO. Boyana Church and its exquisite wall-paintings, Madara Rider – the largest rock -relief in Europe, Tomb of Kazanlak – emblematic monument of the Thracian culture, Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo – impressive stone complex, Thracian Tomb of Sveshtari, Rila Monastery, Old town of Nessebar...

▲ Ancient Bulgarian capital cities! Pliska, Veliki Preslav, Veliko Tarnovo...majestic evidence of state's power, cultural prosperity and national pride. Castles, fortress walls, basilicas...and a lot of wisdom collected through the centuries!

The latest archaeological discoveries in Bulgaria! Perpericon - the famous ancient sanctuary of the Dionysus, Starosel - the oldest Thracian tomb in South-eastern Europe and the incredible phiale mask of King Theres of Odrin. Magnificent portraits in the Ostrusha mound and Tatul – sanctuary for sacrificial ceremonies in the name of ancient Thracian deities. And the latest sensational discovery of the relics of St. Joan the Baptist on the island St. Ivan near Sozopol.



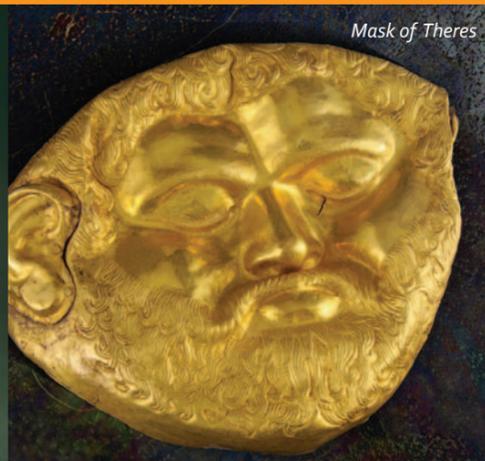
Tomb of Kazanlak



Madara Rider



Borovo



Mask of Theres

Ancient Thracians and their treasures! An insight into the way of life of people who lived more than 2 500 years ago. The most famous are the Panagyurishte Treasure, Rogozen Treasure, Vulchitrun Treasure and Letnitsa Treasure. The rhytones of Borovo Treasure will overwhelm you with their exquisiteness! The oldest decorated gold object in Europe was found in the Varna Chalcolithic Necropolis – dated 6 000 years old.



Architectural Masterpieces

Houses, Churches, Monasteries

BULGARIA



Ancient Theatre - Plovdiv

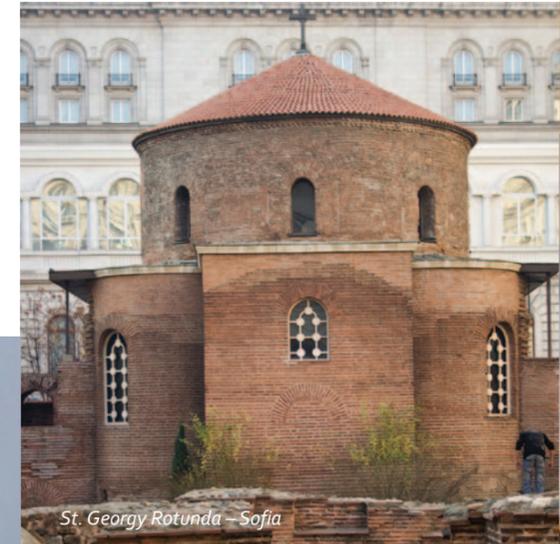


Monastery of Glazhen

Our tour continues with the comfort and the thoughtful world of old houses of the Bulgarian national Revival, noble churches and quiet monasteries. Some of the churches and monasteries will fascinate you with their unique architecture, others with their valuable icons and masterly wall-paintings, as well as with their location in the most picturesque sites of Bulgaria.



Old Town - Plovdiv



St. Georgy Rotunda - Sofia

Bulgarian monasteries and churches are remarkable, among them are Rila Monastery, Bachkovo Monastery, Troyan Monastery, Rozhen Monastery, Preobrazhenski Monastery, St. Bogoroditsa Church in Pazardzhik, Sv. Troitsa Church in Bansko and many others. Your encounter with the mysterious world of Aladzha Monastery or Besarabovski Monastery will be an interesting part of your vacation.



Rila Monastery



Kovachevitsa

Towns and villages like Plovdiv, Bansko, Rozhen, Melnik, Kovachnitsa and Arbanasi are rich in cultural monuments and old houses, which evidence the valuable history of our country. Each old town or village has its own history. Plovdiv is among the five oldest towns in the world. The popularity of Bansko is due to the perfect conditions for skiing in combination with original folklore, old architecture and delicious national dishes in the famous taverns.



Melnik

In the comfort of Tryavna, Koprivshitsa, Etara, Zheravna and Bozhentsi you will see a miraculous combination of magnificent Bulgarian nature, original old architecture and unique national cuisine. Every building in these places is a testament to the culture and the genius of the local architects who lived 150-220 years ago.



Wine and Cuisine

Bulgarians value tasty cuisine, delicious dishes, good wine and grape brandy (rakia). What they value even more is the sharing of these pleasures with friends. What awaits you includes a fine mixture of delicious culinary dishes, tastes and scents that are difficult to describe, jolly southern folk-music and wonderful presence of a lovely garden full of flowers or sight of a mountain spreading as far as the eyes can see.



Banitsa is one of the most popular Bulgarian specialties. Its flavour of baked flour, homemade butter and eggs may have an enchanting effect on you. And there are different types of banitsa – with cheese, with pumpkin and walnuts, with apples...



BULGARIA



▲ Bulgarian yoghurt has an extremely favourable effect on human health. It balances the micro-flora of the stomach, removes the harmful substances and strengthens the immune system. Its origin dates back to the Thracian times some 4000 years B.C.



Find out how picturesque the Bulgarian dishes are! Collecting all the warm colours from nature they are a delight for your eyes and soul. Pepper, carrots, celery, beans, onion, gumbo, potatoes - all the colours of the Bulgarian garden mix in the cooking pot. Meat is a natural and favourite part of Bulgarian dishes. Grilled or roasted, cooked with vegetables, fried, steamed – it is present everywhere...



Every meal on the Bulgarian table is a collection of fresh seasonal products and scents coming from the garden or the mountain. Bulgarian meals are best with spices!

Light meals, with a lot of vegetables, are cooked in spring and summer while meat, pickles and sauerkraut predominate in the cold winter days. The dishes are very healthy – most of them are cooked in pottery on low temperatures.



In the comfort of the countryside houses you will find a wonderful oasis of tranquillity, peace and complete rest. They are marvellous: the countryside yards full of flowers and fruit-trees, shiny red tomatoes, grapes, peaches, peppers and many more fruits and vegetables – healthy and so delicious! Do not miss the chance to taste amber coloured honey...so sweet and healthy!



Bulgaria is famous for its wine. Southern sun, fruit-bearing soil, old traditions originating to the Thracians and a lot of diligence and love are the reason for the Bulgarian wine to be known and highly valued worldwide. Vine-growers pay special attention to the typical Bulgarian sorts of wine. The oldest sort is called Mavrud, which has been around since ancient times and is unique to Bulgaria. The local sorts, "Wide Melnik Vine", "Cabernet Sauvignon" and "Merlot", are grown in the Struma river valley. The produced wine is characterized with warm southern tones in the aroma and depth of taste.



www.bulgariatravel.org



Bulgarian Mountains

Vistoshka, Rila, Pirin and the Rhodope mountains, and near them the impressive shape of the Balkan Range. There are also other mountains – smaller in size, but perfectly suitable for a walk. If you start counting the Bulgarian mountains you may count as many as 37 mountains...

There are about 400 highmountain lakes, scattered as large blue beads in the folds of Rila, Pirin and the Balkan Range. They would be a memorable part of your mountain adventure. ▶▶▶



Pirin Mountain

Magnificent water cascades, picturesque canyons with high rock formations reaching to the sky and transparent water lakes reflecting the neighbouring mountain peaks...It is only a small part of the natural landmarks you will see walking through the eco-pathways that cross Bulgarian mountains.



BULGARIA



Rila Mountain



Rock climbing, rafting, trekking, gliding, mountain biking... If you look for adventures and extreme experiences, Bulgarian mountains will offer these to you to the maximum.

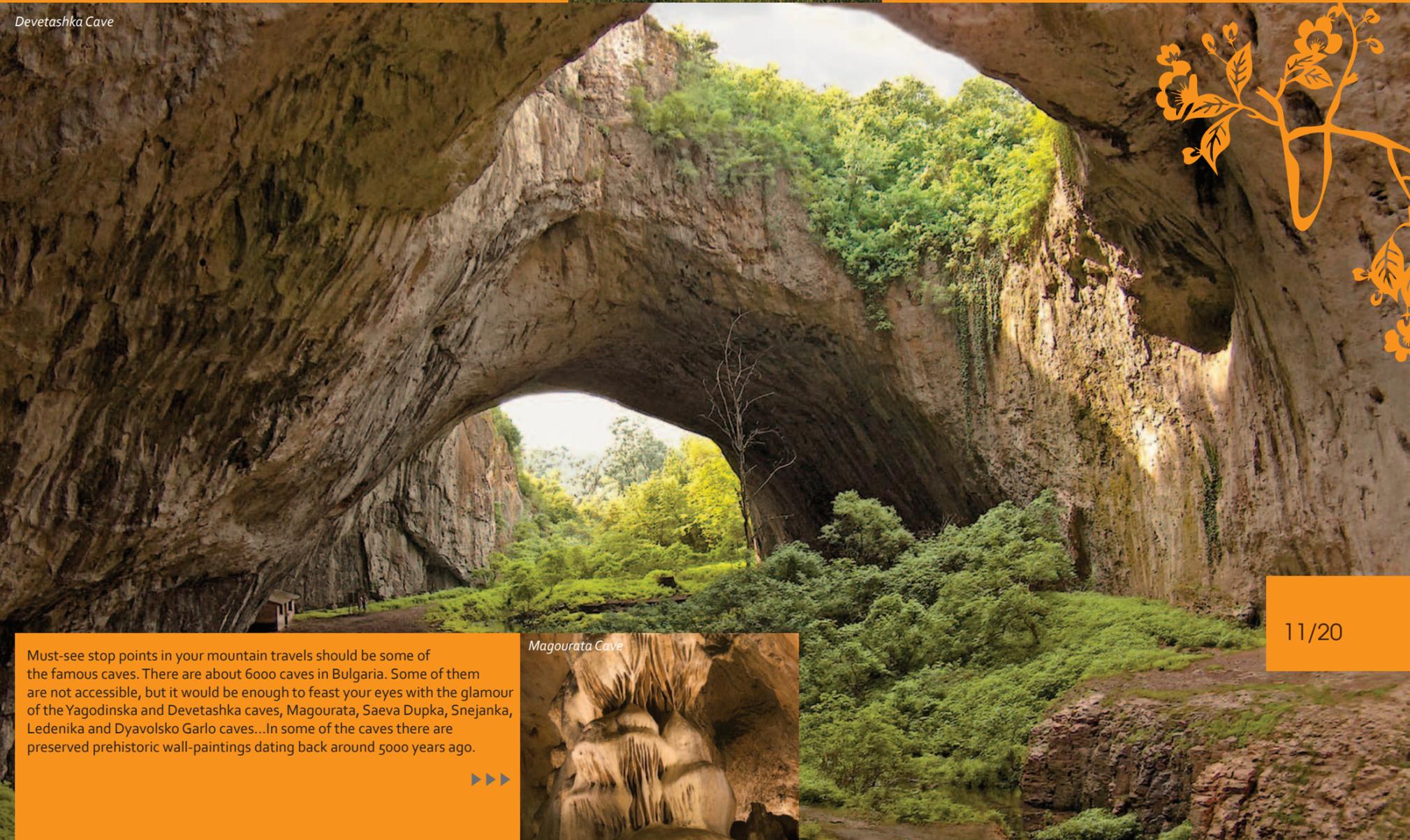


Belogradchik rocks

Mountain rivers, waterfalls, wild nature and many opportunities for tourism and exciting meetings with Bulgarian mountains. There are also dozens of biosphere preserves, huge territories of Pirin, Rila and the Balkan Range are designated national parks. The National park Pirin and the National reserve Srebarna are included in the UNESCO list.

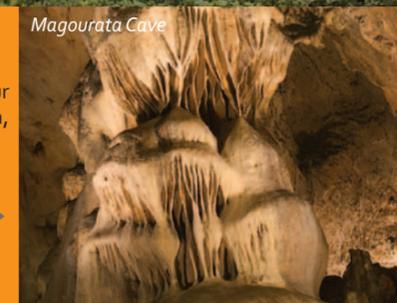


Devetashka Cave



Must-see stop points in your mountain travels should be some of the famous caves. There are about 6000 caves in Bulgaria. Some of them are not accessible, but it would be enough to feast your eyes with the glamour of the Yagodinska and Devetashka caves, Magourata, Saeva Dupka, Snejanika, Ledenika and Dyavolsko Garlo caves...In some of the caves there are preserved prehistoric wall-paintings dating back around 5000 years ago. ▶▶▶

Magourata Cave



www.bulgariatravel.org



Winter Tales from Bulgaria

Due to its location in the southern part of Europe, Bulgaria and the Bulgarian winter resorts are in favour with plenty of sunlight and splendid snow cover.

Etara



The beauty of the Bulgarian mountains in winter time is beyond words! The mountains could be rigorous, but lit by the sun light they could also tempt you with their shiny snow and wonderful ski tracks. Rila, Pirin, Rhodope mountains and near them the impressive folding Balkan. For Sofia's guests - Vitosha Mountain is just a step away!

Bulgaria has another face too – magnificent old houses sleeping quietly under white snow cover. Find the time for winter meetings with Etara, Koprivshitsa, Tryavna, Shiroka Laka and the Old town of Plovdiv, where you will find original architecture, unique Balkan Range colouring and a lot of romance...

All this splendour of sound, colour, scent of smoke, delicious meals and mulled rakia will make your vacation joyful and unforgettable.

Bansko, Borovets, Pamporovo – the winter resorts of Bulgaria! Modern infrastructure, excellent ski racing tracks, lifts, comfortable tea houses and restaurants, and skilled ski instructors will make your winter vacation unforgettable.

The ski tracks of the Bulgarian winter resorts host European and world championships for different winter sports. Along with the excellent conditions for sports there are also wonderful opportunities for relaxation in the recreational Spa and wellness complexes of the neighbouring hotels.



Bansko



If you decide to combine an active winter vacation with congress tourism then Bulgaria is the ideal place. The ski tracks and the climate are suitable for guests with different partialities and sport preparation. Luxurious restaurants, conference halls, Spa complexes and fitness gyms are what you can expect. As well as interesting cultural events programs...





Magnificent Black Sea Shore

The Bulgarian seaside is a magical place! Here warm sea joins caressing sun and ancient culture... The beach has fine sand and gradually sinks in the embrace of the sea. Sunlight is beautiful and is in a large dose here. If we add to this splendour the luxury of the new hotel complexes and the comfort of the small seaside towns and villages then the scene is complete...



Let's do some sports! On the splendid Bulgarian sea shores jogging and beach volleyball may contribute not only to the health and shaping of your body but also bring you joy and amusement. Swimming, surfing, diving, jets and water-skiing – your sport vacation may include as diverse activities as you like. Day after day, sun, water and sports will mould your body into perfection.



Discos, night clubs, restaurants and romantic places on the shore contribute to your lively spirit. The sea, the sand, the wonderful tourism complexes and places, as well as the boat tours will keep you entertained to the fullest. Indulge in emotion!

BULGARIA



Primorsko

Varna, Sunny Beach, Golden Sands, Albena, Nessebar, Pomorie – the lights of the luxurious resorts glimmer like the gems of a precious necklace. There are plenty of options – for those valuing luxury and night life and for those who enjoy quiet vacations in nature and ancient culture.



Yachts, golf, sandy beaches and an infinite desire to enjoy life! Open your heart and eyes for the hot charm of the Black Sea resorts where the party never ends. And be sure to find time to visit Sozopol, Balchik and cape Kaliakra – romantic stop points in your vacation.



Nessebar

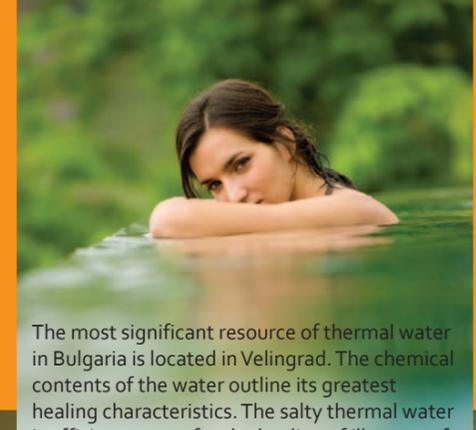
The ancient culture of Bulgaria! Here, near the shore you will meet the unique charm of Aladzha monastery and the historical magnificence of Apollonia Pontika near Sozopol. The Old town of Nessebar is among the cultural monuments with worldwide significance and is under the protection of UNESCO. Bulgarian culture has a modern aspect too – festivals, concerts, exhibition halls.





Beauty and health from 600 mineral water springs

The wide range of procedures offered by professional specialists, with the help of beneficial ethereal oils and honey, will emphasise your good looks.



The most significant resource of thermal water in Bulgaria is located in Velingrad. The chemical contents of the water outline its greatest healing characteristics. The salty thermal water is efficient means for the healing of illnesses of the locomotive system, the peripheral nervous system, the respiration organs, the digestive system, and many more. Another gift from God to Bulgaria is the resources of healing mud, liman mud, turf and bentonite clay. Pomorie, Mineral baths of Karlovo, Marikostino are the well-known mud-baths healing complexes.

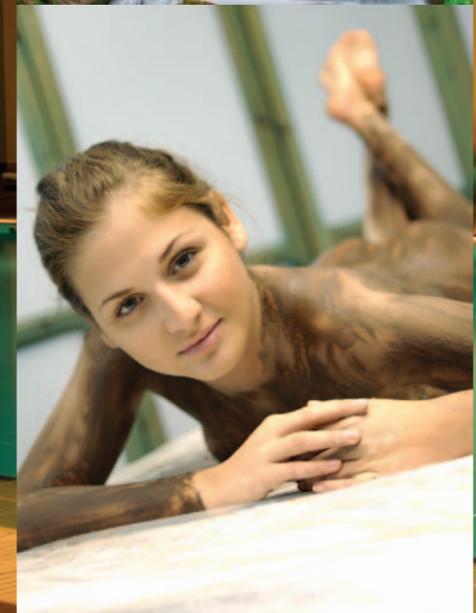
And if you visit Bulgaria to feel the miraculous power of its mineral water and the comfort of the new luxurious Spa complexes you will find wonderful opportunities for relaxation and entertainment – ski and snowboard in the winter, long golden beaches in the summer, high mountains with astonishing views and wild nature...

BULGARIA



The main advantage of Bulgaria is that bioclimatic and belneological resources are in rare combinations known as mountain combination and sea combination. Apart from the excellent natural attractions, you will also find the comfort of the new luxurious complexes in Velingrad, Hisaria, Kyustendil, Devin, Pomorie, Sandanski...

Sapareva Banya



In terms of number of mineral water springs, Bulgaria is ranked second following only Iceland. About 600 mineral springs have been discovered and examined till present. More than 80 percent of them have healing properties with the temperature of the water from 20 to 101 degrees Celsius.





The Unique Bulgaria



Important elements of Bulgaria's cultural map is the national and international folklore festivals and singing contests – the international folklore festivals in the towns of Burgas and Plovdiv, the national folklore fair in the "Rozhen" locality near the town of Smolyan, as well as in the town of Koprivshtitsa and many others. Breathtaking mixture of traditions, talent and ornate colouring!

Bulgarian folklore feasts and traditions are an exceptional mixture of colours and sounds, of pagan and Christian symbolism. The opportunity to be a real part of customs and rituals like "Bulgarian wedding", "Dancing on embers", "Koukers", "Trifon Zarezan", "Enyova bulya", "Koleduvane", "Lazaruvane", "Butterfly", "German", etc. will leave unforgettable memories of your Bulgarian adventure.

The oil giving rose and the herbs take a special place of worship in Bulgarian traditions. Visit Kazanlak, Karlovo and Kalofer at the end of May to see the traditional Festival of the Rose.



www.bulgariatravel.org



Holidays related to the household, family and children are typical for the Bulgarian traditions and customs... Christmas customs, Easter cakes and coloured eggs, name days and wedding rituals – they are all imbued with the unique Bulgarian spirit and identity.

Christian traditions combine in a unique way with pagan rituals. As you see, the Koukers (men disguised in fearful masks and costumes that drive away evil) and the bare foot ember dancers, you will think to yourself "it's magical"!



BULGARIA

We can tell you much more about Bulgaria, about its hospitality. But that would not be enough! You should come here yourself and create your own story seeing with your eyes and feeling with your heart. Find new emotions, taste various dishes and wine, hear the enchanting national songs... Later, you will come back home with a heart full of love. And when the desire for going to Bulgaria starts haunting your mind again – do not hesitate...We are expecting you!



Bulgaria

USEFULL INFORMATION

- State government system:** Parliamentary Republic
- Capital city:** Sofia (population 1.2 million)
- Official language:** Bulgarian, script – Cyrillic
- Religion:** Orthodox (85%), Muslim (8%), other (7%)
- Time zone:** GMT (London) + 2, Eastern Europe time (Germany) + 1
- Climate:** Humid continental, in the southern parts – transitive Mediterranean. Average temperatures for January are from -2 to 2 Co in the lowland and -10 Co in the mountains, in July 19-25 degrees Co in the lowland and about 10 degrees Co in the higher parts of the mountains. Rainfall - 450-600 mm in the lowland, up to 1300 mm in the mountains.
- Currency:** Bulgarian lev is fixed to the euro, 1 EUR = 1.955 BGN
- Important telephone numbers:** code of Bulgaria: +359
European emergency number: 112
- Airports:** Sofia Airport - tel: +359 2 937 22 11
Plovdiv Airport - tel: +359 32 601127
Varna Airport - tel: +359 52 573 323
Burgas Airport - tel: +359 56 870 248
- Contacts:** **Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism**
Bulgaria, 1052 Sofia, 8 Slavyanska Str.,
Tel. +359 2 940 7001, fax: +359 2 987 2190
e-mail: e-docs@mee.government.bg
www.mee.government.bg
www.bulgariatravel.org
National Tourism Information Center
Sofia 1000, 1 Sveta Nedelya Sqr.
tel: 02/ 933 58 11, 933 58 21, 933 58 26



Operational Programme "Regional development" 2007 – 2013
www.bgregio.eu
Investing in your future!



The project is financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the state budget of the Republic of Bulgaria
Scheme for free financial support BG 161PO001/3.3-01/2008 "Support for effective national marketing of tourism product and improvement of informational servicing" under Agreement BG161PO001/3.3-01-4 for the project "Elaboration and distribution of advertising and informational materials for promotion of Bulgaria as a tourism destination"

Bulgaria

Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism

Bulgaria, 1052 Sofia, 8 Slavyanska Str.,

Tel. +359 2 940 7001, fax: +359 2 987 2190

e-mail: e-docs@mee.government.bg

www.mee.government.bg

www.bulgariatravel.org



This document is created within the framework of the project "Elaboration and distribution of advertising and informational materials for promotion of Bulgaria as a tourism destination", Agreement BG161PO001/3.3-01-4, realized with the financial support of Operational Programme "Regional development" 2007 – 2013, co-financed by the European Union through the European Fund for Regional Development. All responsibility for the contents of this document is borne by the beneficiary – the Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism and in no circumstances it should be regarded that this document reflects the official position of the European Union and the Governing Authority.